



## Department of Labor and Industry

### Commissioner's Office

---

Contact Casey Kyler-West, Communications Director

TELEPHONE: (406)444-1520

FAX: (406)444-1394

e-mail: ckylerwest@mt.gov

**DATE 8-26-08**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Using an Unofficial Website Could Jeopardize or Delay Benefits and Lead to Identity Theft**

The Montana Department of Labor & Industry wants to remind those who file online for their unemployment insurance benefits, that the department's website <http://www.dli.mt.gov> is Montana's official source for services and information provided by the department, and [UI4U.mt.gov](http://UI4U.mt.gov) is the only place to apply online for unemployment benefits.

State services are free, but some external, independent websites may charge for a link to Montana's benefit application, or provide unemployment compensation information or assistance that may be false or misleading. These external sites have unemployment in their title and may look official but are not.

At this time only one Montana resident in the Flathead area has reported using this site but Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly wants to warn Montana Residents about these deceptive Internet sites. "This has been happening in other states and its finally reached Montana. These websites prey on people who are the most vulnerable and are just looking for help. They promise prompt response or guaranteed approval, when in fact all they do is jeopardize or delay weekly benefits as they charge fees to people who can't afford to pay them. I want to remind all Montanans that filing for unemployment is a free service provided by the Unemployment Division of the Department of Labor and Industry. "

Those who file on the independent websites ultimately end up filing on the state website, [UI4U.mt.gov](http://UI4U.mt.gov) because that is the only place to file online for unemployment benefits. As a result they've not only delayed their benefits, they've paid a third party to do something that they can do themselves for free. By using the other websites residents are also exposing themselves to identity theft by giving out information to an unknown third party.

The Montana Department of Labor offers a full range of services free of charge, including unemployment benefits for those who lose jobs through no fault of their own, and career services for those who wish to find a job, improve their skills or find a better job.

####